

The Committee Secretary  
Joint Standing Committee on Migration  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Australia

Dear Sir

**Employment Action for Cultural Diversity: Submission to the Senate Inquiry on Multiculturalism**

Employment Action for Cultural Diversity (EACD) (formerly the Multicultural Employment Advocacy Network) is a statewide advocacy working group convened by the Multicultural Development Association comprising advocates from multicultural community organisations across Queensland. The EACD's Mission is to undertake advocacy around employment and training issues, barriers and challenges for culturally and linguistically diverse people from new and emerging communities (NEC) in orders to achieve systemic improvement and reform.

The EACD's key objectives include educating and promoting to private enterprise, government and key stakeholders the benefits of productive diversity and the contribution of refugees and CALD people from NEC to the Australian workforce, economy and community.

The EACD welcomes the opportunity to provide the following response to the Senate Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia. This submission will address Terms of Reference Five and Six only.

This submission is endorsed by all member organisations of the EACD:

- ❖ ACCES Services Inc
- ❖ Cairns Centacare Migrant Services
- ❖ Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland
- ❖ Multicultural Development Association Inc
- ❖ Queensland Council of Social Services
- ❖ Townsville Multicultural Support Group

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Penny Neller, Chair, Employment Action for Cultural Diversity at the Multicultural Development Association on 07 3337 5482.

Yours Sincerely

Kerrin Benson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Multicultural Development Association  
3 May 2011



## ***Employment Action for Cultural Diversity:***

### ***Submission to the Senate Inquiry on Multiculturalism***

**May 2011**

## **1. About Employment Action for Cultural Diversity**

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The EACD's key objectives include educating and promoting to private enterprise, government and key stakeholders the benefits of productive diversity and the contribution of refugees and CALD people from NEC to the Australian workforce, economy and community.

Throughout this submission case studies from clients of EACD member organisations have been provided. Names and personal details of individuals have been changed in order to protect their identity.

## **2. Multiculturalism in Australia**

The EACD supports a Multicultural Australia. Migrants and refugees have contributed significantly to Australia's economic prosperity, development and successes through provision of labour and diverse skills, knowledge and expertise to the Australian workforce; establishment of local enterprise and global links and trade; income generation; remittances to developing countries and investment.<sup>1</sup> The combined skills and successes of all Australians in economics, trade and development has forged Australia's international reputation as a multicultural success story.

Multiculturalism is crucial to Australia's continued economic prosperity, particularly given our nation's ageing workforce, skills shortages and ongoing labour demand. Future multicultural policy must recognise and promote the benefits and value of productive diversity and the contribution of refugees and migrants to the Australian workforce, economy and community. Improved strategies and frameworks to maximise the utilisation of migrant's and refugees skills must be developed. Commitment by the Australian, State and Territory and Local Governments to funding, resourcing and support for refugees and migrants is also necessary to facilitate access to and equity of opportunity in employment.

## **3. Term of Reference Five: The role migration has played and contributes to building Australia's long term productive capacity**

Employment of migrants and refugees has and continues to provide considerable benefits to the Australian economy through business development, promotion of cultural diversity, enhanced productivity and provision of diverse skills, knowledge and experience across all professions, sectors and industries. Internationally migration has and continues to improve trade and diplomacy linkages and global relationships; contributes to the development of strong Australian export markets and provides outward remittances to support communities and individuals globally.<sup>2</sup> In Australia, meaningful employment reduces the costs associated with unemployment and dependency on income support, and reduces health care costs through

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<sup>1</sup> Refugee Council of Australia, *Economic, civic and social contributions of refugees and humanitarian entrants: A Literature Review* (2010) 7-14.

<sup>2</sup> Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Multiculturalism: A position paper by the Acting Race Discrimination Commissioner* (2007) 7.

contributing to improved health outcomes for refugee and migrant communities.

There are numerous research studies and evidence which demonstrates that migration is crucial to Australia's economic future and prosperity.<sup>3</sup> For example, the 2010 Intergenerational Report noted that lower net overseas migration and fertility will result not only in lower population growth but that real GDP per person in 2049 – 2050 would be approximately 2 per cent lower.<sup>4</sup>

Further, Access Economics, in its *Migrant Fiscal Impact Model: 2008 Update*, in considering the costs of the 2006-07 migration program on government services by comparison to fiscal benefits from taxation and visa charges, found a benefit to the Australian economy of \$536 million in the first year, a further \$856 million in the second year, and an anticipated \$1.34 billion by the twentieth year.<sup>5</sup> As noted by then Minister for Immigration and Citizenship Senator Chris Evans migrants also provide positive contributions to the Australian economy through overcoming skills shortages, spending on goods and services, and through high labour market participation and commensurate high salaries (resulting in higher tax receipts).<sup>6</sup>

Employment, training and economic participation also provides significant positive economic, health and social benefits for refugee and migrant communities which contributes to Australia's long term productive capacity. Engagement in employment and training enables migrants and refugees to productively contribute to Australian society, establish knowledge and experience of the Australian labour market and workplace culture and improve English language skills. Employment and training also enables refugees and migrants to personally develop, increase their confidence, enhance self-worth and feel valued through offering unique opportunities for social inclusion. Through engagement and inclusion within meaningful, sustainable employment refugees and migrants are better supported to continue to contribute to Australia's long term economic and productive capacity.

Over the next few decades, as Australia's population ages, workers retire, birth rates remain steady or decline, the resources boom continues and industries continue their strong demand for skilled labour, migration will be critical to securing Australia's future by ensuring per capita GDP continues to grow, that Australia remains prosperous and economically stable and that we are well positioned to address the economic and social challenges ahead.

#### **4. Term of Reference Six: The profile of skilled migration to Australia and the extent to which Australia is fully utilising the skills of all migrants**

##### **a) Australia's utilisation of skills of migrants**

In EACD's experience people from refugee and migrants are motivated and eager to participate in Australian economic life and the broader community through employment. Many were gainfully employed in their home countries and have a demonstrated capacity and willingness to work and to be economically productive. On arriving in Australia, refugees and migrants generally recognise enormous opportunities to realise and fulfil personal dreams and aspirations in relation to

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<sup>3</sup> For example, see the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute's report *Immigration, Labour Supply and Per Capita Gross Domestic Product; Australia 2010 – 2050* (May 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Australian Government, The Treasury, *The 2010 Intergenerational Report: Executive Summary* (2010) xv.

<sup>5</sup> Migration program boosts economy and eases skills, Friday 22 August 2008

<<http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2008/ce08081.htm>> at 14 April 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

employment. As a Rohingya client (from Burma) of the Multicultural Development Association (MDA) once expressed to MDA caseworkers 'In Australia we have a chance that our dreams can become our reality. Before coming to Australia our reality meant we couldn't even dream'.

In EACD's view however the benefits of a culturally diverse workforce and the unique knowledge, skills and expertise of refugees and migrants are not sufficiently recognised, promoted or utilised in Australia by governments and the private sector. This is reflected by the ongoing systemic barriers to employment and vulnerability in employment refugee and migrant job seekers continue to experience, including:

- Lack of recognition of previous work experience
- Lack of local work experience as a reason for not hiring employees from refugee and migrant backgrounds
- Lack of local referees
- Failure to recognise overseas skills and qualifications
- Prevalence of racism, discrimination and intolerance towards refugees and migrants who are job seeking, as well as when employed in Australian workplaces
- Absence of cultural competency and awareness within workplaces
- Vulnerability to exploitation.

Women from refugee and CALD backgrounds in particular continue to experience disadvantage in obtaining employment due to the above issues as well as lack of access to affordable child care and family and cultural beliefs which place constraints on employment. The EACD will shortly administer a statewide survey to ascertain the key barriers to employment for CALD women from NEC in Queensland and will make recommendations to local and state government around solutions and strategies to improve their access to meaningful, sustainable employment.

Barriers to refugee and migrants employment are discussed further in the former Multicultural Employment Advocacy Network's submission to the Queensland Multicultural Policy Review (**Appendix A**).

### **Case Study**

*Anu (not her real name) and her husband arrived in Australia from Sri Lanka 18 months ago. In Sri Lanka, Anu was highly successful in the information technology industry, and occupied a senior position in a company. Anu and her husband wished for a better quality of life and successfully migrated under a skilled migrant visa. She speaks English fluently and is highly qualified, having nearly completed her Masters degree in Information Technology.*

*Since their arrival Anu has spent a great deal of time and energy searching for a job in the information technology industry. Despite her considerable experience and qualifications she has been turned down by ten potential employers for jobs ranging from positions equivalent to her role in Sri Lanka to data entry because she has not previously worked in Australia and has no local work experience. Anu is desperate to earn some form of income as she and her husband, who is also searching for work, have been spending their savings and living with friends. Anu currently earns \$50 per week cooking Sri Lankan food at the weekend markets, which she hopes will be enough to support them until she finds work.*

The above factors, combined with other challenges including English language proficiency, lack of transport, absence of specialised employment support services

and lack of local networks and contacts contributes to reduced employment pathways and opportunities for refugees and migrants, underemployment, unemployment and diminished economic productivity.

**The extent to which adult men from refugee backgrounds experience unemployment during settlement in Brisbane is a focus of ongoing research by the La Trobe Refugee Research Centre and the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, as part of its 2-year longitudinal SettleMEN research project.<sup>7</sup>**

**The project aims to identify the ways recently arrived refugee men (between 18 and 69) can be better assisted around health, settlement and participation in the Australian community.<sup>8</sup> As at September 2009:**

- **Only 42% of participants were employed, with 46% employed full time and 54% employed part-time or undertaking casual work.**
- **The main occupation of participants at the time of interview were factory work (35%), building/labouring (29%), farming (8%) and cleaning (2%), despite the main occupation's of 30% of participants, prior to arrival in Australia, being teachers, interpreters, community workers and students.**
- **The most common barrier to employment identified by participants was the requirements to have Australian work experience, followed by the requirement to have referees in Australia.<sup>9</sup>**

Lack of employment and recruitment agencies in Queensland and nationally which specialise in the provision of culturally specific services to CALD communities is a significant barrier to obtaining employment for refugees and migrants. ACCES Services Inc (Assisting Collaborative Community Employment Support Services) at Logan is the only CALD-specific JSA service provider in Queensland.<sup>10</sup> In one regional area it is understood that an industry body has requested the provision of more migrants to the region to address skills shortages as, in the absence of specialised employment providers many migrants are not being effectively linked to regional and remote employers. As settlement of refugees and new migrants rapidly increases throughout Queensland, further CALD-specific employment service providers are required to support people from refugee and CALD backgrounds across the State.

It is noted that refugees and migrants in rural and regional Australia and youth experience the above barriers as well as unique challenges in seeking and maintaining employment. To address these barriers the MDA, for example, has been involved in a number of successful regional employment and training programs in Central and South- East Queensland, and youth employment and life skills programs to deliver employment opportunities, services and pathways for people from refugee and CALD backgrounds (details of these are attached in **Appendix B**). EACD supports the implementation of further programs to provide innovative approaches and strategies for employment of refugees and migrants, and Australia's economic

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<sup>7</sup> La Trobe refugee Research Centre SettleMEN Project, *Broadsheet No 2: Employment outcomes and experiences among adult men from refugee backgrounds* (September 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See ACCES Services website at: <http://www.accessservicesinc.org.au/services/services.htm>.

development and prosperity.

In regional and rural areas the absence of transport is a significant barrier to employment. As noted by the Refugee Council of Australia:

*The issues of limited access to affordable housing [in close proximity to an employer] and transport are closely correlated with participation in the labour force, and present a particular challenge for newly settled refugee and humanitarian entrants... The lack of safe, efficient and affordable public transport in outer metropolitan and regional areas is therefore a major barrier in accessing employment opportunities.<sup>11</sup>*

Of particular concern to EACD and other community stakeholders is the ongoing reluctance of employers, primarily in the private sector, to employ and provide work experience to people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. This is attributable to the multiple factors above, as well as lack of prior experience in employing and working with people from culturally diverse backgrounds, and an absence of knowledge and information about refugee and migrant workers and the benefits in employing them.

The prevalence of racism, discrimination and intolerance towards refugees and migrants when seeking employment, as well as in Australian workplaces is a major ongoing systemic issue inhibiting access to employment, work experience and training opportunities for migrants and refugees. Racism and discrimination in the context of employment is generally based on negative attitudes, stereotyping and stigma around skin colour, appearance and physical attributes, cultural and religious background, body language and accent, limited English language proficiency and ethnicity.<sup>12</sup> Refugees and migrants regularly report to multicultural advocacy workers across Queensland their experiences of interviews being discontinued when prospective employers see a person or hear their accent and realise they are from a CALD background, and being denied interviews at the application stage for the same reason.

### **Case Study**

*Jane (not her real name) responded to an office administration vacancy that was advertised in a local newspaper. She was successful in obtaining an interview for the advertised position. A female company representative left a message asking that Jane call her back to arrange an interview time.*

*When Jane returned the call the female representative commented to Jane 'You have an accent.....Where are you calling from?'. Jane said she was calling from and resided in Brisbane, and that she was married to an Australian. The company representative said 'Where are you calling from exactly? You have an accent!! Where are you from, Jane?' Jane advised that she was originally from Vanuatu, but that her first language was English. She also said that she had English and Vanuatu parentage. The company representative replied 'But you have an accent.....' and paused for 20 seconds. Jane said 'Hello' to which the company representative was silent and then hung up the phone.*

<sup>11</sup> Refugee Council of Australia, *What Works: Employment strategies for refugee and humanitarian entrants* (2010) 19.

<sup>12</sup>Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care, *Confronting Racism in Communities Project Racism in Communities Project: A Final Report on the nature and extent of racism in Queensland* (2009) 25.

*The company representative never called back to schedule the interview. Jane rang several times and left two messages, but was never contacted.*

*The experience has affected Jane emotionally and psychologically. She reports a high level of distrust in potential employers when applying for jobs and a sense of hopelessness in finding employment. She is concerned that she will continue to be judged inequitably and discriminated against when attempting to secure employment in the future.*

These experiences of racism and discrimination in seeking employment and in workplaces is supported by key research across Australia and Queensland, as noted in the box below.

**A key finding of the 2009 *Confronting Racism in Communities Project Racism in Communities Project: A Final Report on the nature and extent of racism in Queensland* was that people from CALD communities consistently experience when seeking employment and in the context of employment, with 14% of respondents reporting racist incidents including harassment, exclusion from workplace teams and social events, lack of promotion, belittling and racist jokes, and discrimination when applying for jobs based on accents at interviews, ethnic names and lack of recognition of past experience.<sup>13</sup>**

**The extent of racism in Australian workplaces is also noted in the *Challenging Racism: the Anti-Racism Research Project* national level findings which evidence that of the 12,512 individuals across Australia surveyed between 2001-2008 17.5% experienced discrimination in the workplace, second only to discrimination at a shop or restaurant (17.8%).<sup>14</sup>**

In the past decade Australia has experienced increased settlement of people under Australia's Humanitarian Program (refugees and people in humanitarian need) and Migration Program (which includes skilled and family migration). In the financial year ending 30 June 2010, over 140,000 people from CALD backgrounds arrived and settled permanently in Australia. Approximately 74% of the 140,000 new arrivals were between 15 and 64 years of age and therefore eligible to be employed or undertake training. 44% of those new arrivals were not employed or in the labour force upon arrival in Australia. These statistics demonstrate the significant potential demand by refugees and new arrivals for employment services and support.

As noted above, employing and training refugees and migrants offers economic advantages for private enterprise. Culturally diverse workers benefit private workplaces and business through providing a range of valuable cultural and linguistic skills, knowledge and experience advantageous to trade, development, marketing, innovation, productivity and customer service. Given the growing migrant population in Australia, the vast potential economic productivity of new arrivals through employment should be appropriately supported in order to foster the development of prosperous, healthy and secure CALD communities, and the greater Australian community. This is particularly important for refugees, many of whom arrive in

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>14</sup> University of Western Sydney, *Challenging Racism: the Anti-Racism Research Project national level findings 2001 - 2008*  
<[http://www.uws.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/173635/NationalLevelFindingsV1.pdf](http://www.uws.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/173635/NationalLevelFindingsV1.pdf)> at 5 April 2011.



Australia having endured extreme violence, long periods in refugee camps, torture, trauma and malnourishment, separation from and loss of family members and poverty, to facilitate successful settlement and social inclusion in Australia.

All Australian governments have a responsibility to promote the value of a culturally diverse workforce and the skills, knowledge and experience of refugee and migrant job seekers. Australian governments, the private sector and the broader Australian community must also support people from refugee and CALD backgrounds to access appropriate and meaningful employment and training opportunities and secure future career paths, supported by systems which are responsive to the needs of people from diverse cultures. English language training and support and work experience are particularly vital in this regard to ensure the successful transition and inclusion of refugees and CALD people into Australian workplaces, and to enable equal economic participation.

Strengthened investment in employment and social support for refugees and migrants in the short term is a valuable and cost effective investment for the future through enabling new migrants to overcome initial barriers in order to obtain meaningful, sustainable employment.

In order to better utilise the skills, experience and labour capacity of refugees and migrants to our economic advantage, further investment in and support of services to assist refugee and migrant jobseekers to obtain employment, undertake training and learn English is necessary. In this regard, Jobs Australia Services and other employment service providers have a vital ongoing role and must be appropriately supported and resourced to deliver targeted, quality and effective employment services to refugee and CALD jobseekers. Further, enhanced collaboration between employment services providers, settlement services, VET providers and industry is also essential to achieve better employment and training outcomes for refugees and migrants and to enhance Australia's long-term economic prosperity.

## **b) The Skilled Migrant Program**

EACD supports Australia's Skilled Migration Program and recognises the valuable contribution of skilled migrants to Australia's economy, productivity, nation-building and ongoing development and diversity. In EACD's experience however many skilled migrants arrive in Australia with high expectations of job opportunities and employability which often are not realised due to extraneous factors such as lack of local work experience, refusal by employers to recognise prior overseas experience, difficulties around skills recognition and racism and discrimination.

From its experiences in providing employment services, EACD notes the following difficulties experienced by migrants entering Australia under the Skilled Migration Program:

- Most migrants under the Skilled Migration Program arrive with an expectation and perception that they will immediately be able to enter employment in their desired profession in Australia. However, due to the factors noted below including lack of skills recognition, lack of local work experience and lack of job readiness, for many this is not the reality. Migrants are not informed prior to arriving that the academic assessment of their qualifications is not a guarantee of employment and in most cases will have limited industry relevance as it is not indicative of their vocational capacity (i.e. literacy, communication skills and ability to engage in a different work culture). There is also an inaccurate belief among many migrants that a positive skills assessment or recognition is a guarantee of work.

- There is limited linking between potential skilled migrants and employment opportunities and services as part of the Skilled Migrant visa application process. Consequently, many skilled migrants arrive in Australia without immediate employment prospects, and often spend years trying to find employment which meets their skills and expectations. As such, clients who were accountants, engineers and teachers in their country of origin often have no option but to accept employment for which they are highly overqualified (such as administration positions, transport driving, hospitality, etc) in order to financially support themselves. This is immensely frustrating and disappointing for many migrants who give up their lives in their countries of origin and spend their life savings to make a new life in Australia.
- Many skilled migrant arrive in Australia but are not 'job ready' – that is, they have not applied for positions and do not know local processes and requirements for job seeking and applications.

Where migrants wish to work locally in professions which require registration (such as accounting, engineering, medicine, health, law and education) they are often not made aware prior to arrival that they are required to have their overseas skills formally recognised by Australian professional and industry bodies. Accordingly, on arrival many migrants discover their skills are not recognised and that they are required to pay for application and registration processes, or alternatively undertake further study or bridging courses to have their skills recognised, often at considerable further (an unanticipated) expense.

### **Case Study**

*Ali (not his real name) is a doctor from Afghanistan and held a senior position at a university in Khabul, where he taught surgery. He came to Australia to escape persecution and conflict cause by the war, leaving his wife and young son behind.*

*Ali has experienced great difficulties in having his qualifications recognised in Australia. He needs to obtain primary source certification for his qualifications, and therefore must send his degree back to Afghanistan. This is concerning for him and very difficult because of the ongoing conflict and instability in Afghanistan. There are no international couriers and the local post is very unreliable.*

*The complex regulatory processes involved in Ali having his skills and qualifications recognised has almost overwhelmed his desire to pursue a similar profession here. Ali says "I sat in the emergency department of the hospital the other night for hours and observed the doctors doing their job. I wanted so much to help but I knew I couldn't."*

*It is a vicious circle – without work, he is unable to save enough money to sit for the exams he must pass to work as a doctor in Australia. He must therefore find a job, any job. He is considering obtaining a security licence so that he can obtain some form of employment to support himself and work towards sitting the medical exams.*

- Skilled migrants, while possessing good English language skills, generally lack the vocabulary and language unique to Australian workplace culture, as well as knowledge of the 'Australian workplace'. At present there are few transition programs or other initiatives to prepare people to be able to work within and adapt quickly to Australian workplaces.

- The Program does not provide support to assist skilled migrants to learn how to engage with employment in Australia. There is a gap between how jobs are accessed in their countries of origins and the mechanisms for obtaining jobs in Australia. There is no linking to support services through the Program.
- Due to inability to access employment and underemployment, EACD is aware of skilled migrants experiencing health issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress, lack of self-esteem, feelings of worthlessness and culture shock. Without employment, and due to underemployment, some migrants become disengaged from their profession and have little ability to reengage with the profession at the level they attained prior to leaving their country of origin. These factors also create enormous pressure and tension for families, and lead to further use of community resources to provide support for people around employment and other issues.
- International experience is increasingly attractive characteristic for potential employers. Despite this, many migrants with considerable international experience who enter Australia under the Skilled Migrant Program, continually struggle to have that experience recognised and to secure meaningful employment. Skilled migration is often perceived as a 'last resort', rather than best practice by employers.
- Some spouses of skilled migrants also experience disadvantage and unmet need in accompanying their skilled migrant spouse to Australia, including:
  - There is no requirement for spouses to have English language skills prior to entering Australia, and therefore they require intensive support to be able to settle and function in day to day life in Australia.
  - Spouses arriving under temporary spouse visas (visa categories 309 and 820, for example) are not entitled to other services such as Medicare or income support. This further financially disadvantages spouses (and families) where spouses and the spouse's skilled migrant partner are unable to obtain, or immediately obtain employment, or where skilled migrants are underemployed.
  - Some spouses arrive in Australia on their husband's or wife's visa and are also afforded less access to services. As the spouse of the primary visa holder is also considered to be in that visa category confusion is created for potential employers. This often occurs where the spouse is on their partner's student visa – some employers mistakenly believe the spouse is also on a student visa and that they are therefore only able to work.
- Some Employer Sponsored visa holders (such as those on 457 visas) holders are not eligible for Settlement Grant Program services. Some employers in Australia are not always equipped or willing to provide adequate support to settle into the community and orientation in Australia. As such, essential needs, such as healthcare, may not be well provided for.

Skilled migration is intended to meet the needs of Australian employers by providing them with skilled, knowledgeable, experienced overseas workers to meet increasing demands unable to be met by the local labour market. As demonstrated by the issues noted above, the reality for many workers and employers under the current skilled migrant program is that neither of their needs are being met. Generally skilled migrants are not informed about the above barriers and challenges to employment in

Australia, creating false and misleading impressions of opportunities in Australia for potential migrants overseas considering applying for skilled migration to Australia. EACD is aware of many migrants returning to their countries of origin financially disadvantaged and faced with the prospect of rebuilding their lives at home due to their inability to secure meaningful employment in their field of choice in Australia.

These issues should not result in a reduction in the skilled migration program. The benefits to Australia's economy and culture are well-recognised and documented. To build on these benefits some changes to the skilled migration program and supports for skilled migrants and their families are recommended and are noted below.

## **5. Recommendations**

To enable Australia to fully utilise the skills of refugees and migrants; better meet the needs of skilled migrants and Australian employers; and ensure Australia's long-term economic prosperity EACD recommends:

### **The Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments:**

1. Partner to develop a national employment strategy for refugees and migrants.
2. Collaborate with the private and community sectors to positively promote, through an awareness raising campaign, cultural diversity and value, skills, knowledge and expertise of refugees and migrants. This would better address discrimination in employment and play a vital role in improving employer's education and understanding the benefits of refugee and migrant employees, and facilitate more harmonious workplace relations. It would also provide an opportunity to promote the value of the Skilled Migration Program, and the Humanitarian Program.
3. Develop and implement programs which combine Vocational Education and Training, English language learning and work experience opportunities to improve pathways to employment.
4. Establish CALD specific service providers throughout Queensland, particularly in key settlement areas including Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Toowoomba, to build the capacity of people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to seek, secure and maintain employment and training.

Such programs should provide support for refugees and skilled migrants around job preparation, job seeking, education in relation to Australian workplace culture and language and opportunities for linkages between skilled migrants and employers.

5. Explore options to address the unique employment needs of refugee and CALD youth be explored, including:
  - Introduction of programs and initiatives which integrate learning, vocational training and work experience, as well as life skills support; and
  - Provision by employment service providers of services and support specifically targeted at refugee and CALD youth.

6. Collaborate with private and non-government sector employers to develop and deliver programs and initiatives in rural and regional areas to secure better employment outcomes and meaningful participation activities for refugee and CALD jobseekers.
7. Employers to identify areas of employment need, share information regarding employment, training and job seeker trends and knowledge around jobseekers from refugee and CALD backgrounds, develop and deliver work placement programs and secure employment and training opportunities.
8. Partner with private organisations and/or the community sector to deliver cross-cultural training in Australian workplaces. Cultural competence promotes individual and organisational awareness, knowledge, skills and practices for interaction with people from CALD backgrounds and assists in effective functioning in culturally diverse situations. The development of cultural competence through cross-cultural training is invaluable in improving employers' and employees' awareness, knowledge and understanding of different cultures and cultural issues, their influence and impact in the workplace and cultural diversity policies and practices.
9. Develop targeted employment programs and initiatives for refugee and CALD women to address the additional vulnerability and challenges they experience in obtaining employment.

**It is also recommended the Department of Immigration and Citizenship:**

10. Provide more comprehensive information to skilled migrant applicants through its website and tailored resources in relation to:
  - That employment in Australia may not be secured immediately and to be prepared for that eventuality
  - The purpose of undertaking a positive skills assessment and that it is not a guarantee of employment
  - Local processes and procedures for applying for jobs, to ensure improved 'job readiness'.
  - Skills recognition. In particular, ensuring potential migrants are informed and aware that they may need to undertake further study, training or other requirements in order to practice in professional fields in Australia.
11. Develop specific programs to link potential skilled migrants and employers as part of the Skilled Migrant visa application process to facilitate more immediate employment on arrival of skilled migrants to Australia.
12. Expand provision of English language, income, health and other social support to spouses of temporary visa entrants to enable them to successfully settle in Australia, and to access employment opportunities.